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THE MASSACHUSETTS LAW OF LANDLORD AND TENANT. By Prescott F. Hall. Boston: George B. Reed. 1899. pp. xl. 534.

Landlord and Tenant Law in Massachusetts has a marked individuality and importance. The subject is relatively large, occasionally whimsical. For example, the doctrine of tenancies from year to year accepted in England and generally in the United States finds no favor in Massachusetts. *Ellis v. Paige*, 1 Pick. 43. And the related rule in *Curtis v. Galvin*, 1 Allen, 215, reminds one forcibly of the old technicalities—such as fines and recoveries. Here, then, is an excellent field for a purely local treatise,—and Mr. Hall's is strictly that. Speaking generally, the work is a valuable labor-saving tool for the working practitioner. As the author points out in his preface, he has endeavored to summarize so as to furnish a complete index to the decisions; to state the law as far as possible in the language of the court; to quote from opinions with sufficient fulness, so that a comparison with the original reports may often be dispensed with; to give not only the substantive law, but matters of pleading, practice and evidence. The value of such a book must necessarily depend on an exhaustive list of authorities, on skill in order and condensation. A brief examination of the author's citations reveals neither omissions nor errors of importance. The more leading cases appear in some half-dozen different places; notably, *Watriss v. Cambridge National Bank*, 124 Mass. 571, which holds that a tenant must remove his fixtures during his term or lose them, and the taking of a subsequent lease of the same premises will not entitle him to remove them during his second term. And the authorities are not entirely confined to Massachusetts. Where the growth of some doctrine is traceable historically to a leading case in a foreign jurisdiction, the author has indicated it. p. 108, *Dumpor's Case*, 40 Co. 119, b. The work is clear in its arrangement, admirable in its condensation, and will prove invaluable as a manual of ready reference. J. W.

THE LAW RELATING TO CHOSSES IN ACTION. By Walter R. Warren. London: Sweet and Maxwell. 1899. p. xxxi, 456.

This book is practically the first attempt to deal with *choses in action* as a separate branch of the law. The subject, the author explains, is practically incapable of helpful definition; *choses in action* is merely a name descriptive of a great body of rights of various origin which have really no class characteristics. The plan of the book is, in brief, to find out what rights have been considered *choses in action* by the courts, and to examine each species of those rights in regard to its assignability at common law, in equity, or by statutes, with particular reference to the Judicature Act. Then the author takes up the methods of assignment of the various kinds of *choses in action*, both as to voluntary transfers and transfers by operation of law, and finally the English practice in regard to all these matters. The chapters dealing with assignments at common law and in equity seem especially valuable; the discussion of the doctrine of *Dearle v. Hill* is admirable. It is unfortunate that Mr. Warren saw fit to omit any discussion of gifts of *choses in action*—especially debts, specialty debts, and equitable obligations—and the right of a donor to recall them. The first are always revocable; the second, it seems, should be irrevocable, though no one can be sure what is the English law on the subject (see 12 HARVARD LAW REVIEW 498); the third are irrevocable. The distinctions are seldom understood.

The great merits of the book are clearness and definiteness. It seems an adequate compendium of English statutes and practice on *choses in action*. It is surely a helpful summary of their history and the principles which govern them. In the latter aspect, it has a real value for the American lawyer.

J. P. C. JR.

THE GROWTH OF THE CONSTITUTION IN THE FEDERAL CONVENTION OF 1787. By William M. Meigs. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co. 1900. pp. iv, 374.

It is much to say of a book that it will be an indispensable one to any student of constitutional law, yet this may fairly be said of the book under review. The present volume traces in order the origin and development of each separate clause of the Constitution in the Federal Convention of 1787, from its first suggestion in that body to the form finally approved. Whenever the interpretation of any clause of the Constitution is in question, the development of that clause in the Convention must be considered in any well-advised discussion. Hitherto one was obliged to search out through the indices of Elliot's Debates this development of any particular clause, — pleasant labor always, but in result too often unsatisfactory to one without special learning in the contemporaneous literature of the Constitution. Now any one may find the history of every clause set forth succinctly and accurately in the present volume. The work, as needs be, is almost wholly without originality, but it has for that reason some part of that undying interest which attaches to every motion and every speech in the Federal Convention. However, it is just here that the book fails — in atmosphere. It is too precise, too well arranged. The Constitution grew in the Convention in no such way. Again, fault may be found with the almost entire absence of reference to the originals, and with the failure to grapple with the discrepancies between the Journal of the Convention, the Yates Minutes, and the Madison papers, — but these are conscious and deliberate omissions. And to be quite fair to the author, he has a defined object, and he accomplishes it. Moreover, especial credit is to be given to the appendix; one wonders why these six principal drafts which mark the evolution of the Constitution in the Convention were never collated before.

B. W.

We have also received : —

REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES, INCLUDING CHANGES BY INTERPRETATION AND AMENDMENT. By W. G. Bullitt. Cincinnati: The Robert Clark Co. 1899. pp. xii, 360. This manual is described as written for "lawyers and those not learned in the law;" yet it must be confessed that the simple style and strict avoidance of technicality give the book a distinctly popular tone. The people are solemnly warned against an unwarranted assumption of powers by the Executive and Congress, gradual, disguised, but none the less subversive to a republican form of government. The author's conception of the government has a marked southern tone. He finds the sovereignty in the people of the respective States under the Constitution of 1787. He examines that constitution and finds no powers granted to the United States as a whole, — the three departments of the government are the